













For its role as the end of the Texas (or Western) Trail Drives from 1875-1885, Ogallala has been designated as Nebraska's Cowboy Capital. Boot Hill, the town's first cemetery, is now a historic park and tombstone history of early Ogallala.

As home of Nebraska's largest playground, Lake McConaughy, Ogallala also reigns as Nebraska's Recreation Capital.

We invite you to visit unique attractions and events, such as Keystone's Little Church, a combined Catholic - Protestant Church built in 1908; our new \$ 2.5 million Lake McConaughy Visitor Center and nearby eagle viewing facility; the Petrified Wood Gallery; the 1897 victorian Mansion on the Hill; Ole's Big Game Lounge & Steakhouse; Front Street, a western and historical attraction; the new Soap Box Derby track; Ogallala Round-Up Rodeo; Paxton's Bull Riding Classic; Kites & Castles Contest; Indian Summer Rendezvous; challenging golf courses; and Ash Hollow State Historical Park in adjacent Garden County. Hunting includes Canadian geese, ducks, grouse, pheasants, quail and turkey. The county ranks as the Number 3 spot for bird watching in the nation including Sandhill Cranes and the McConaughy-Lake Ogallala area ranks Number 1 in the state in eagle viewing.

There's something for everyone in Ogallala and Keith County! Ogallala/Keith County Visitors Committee



The \$2.5 million Lake McConaughy Water Interpretive and Visitors Center is perched on a bluff onequarter mile south of Kingsley Dam overlooking Lake McConaughy. The 8,700 square foot Visitors Center features Nebraska's first water interpretive center. An exhibit in the Center shows the balancing needs of recreation, fish and wildlife, irrigation and hydropower. Also within the Visitors Center is a diving bell used in 1946 to inspect the outlet structures of the dam. In addition to wildlife and natural history related films and video productions, there is a video of the construction of Kingsley Dam made from original photos and 8mm footage. The facility also includes a community room available for public meetings and receptions, a fresh water aquarium, with two 1,500 gallon tanks, a 50 seat state-of-the-art theater, and information desk, gift shop and public rest rooms.



Tour Boot Hill for a tombstone history of early Ogallala. During its 10-year span as the end of the Texas Trail, Ogallala recorded more violent deaths than Dodge City, Kansas.



A little bit of paradise right here in Nebraska. Ogallala is the proud home of Lake McConaughy, a treasure that brings folks from all over to enjoy the serenity of the white sand beaches and the brilliant blue sky of Nebraska. Add great fishing, hunting, watersports, bird watching, and plenty of crystal clear water...paradise!



# THE WATER...THE WEST...THE BEST. OGALLALA

Keith County, Nebraska



Built in 1922, the Spruce Street Station in Ogallala is considered to be one of the best preserved of the fewer than 20 former Standard Oil Stations still standing. Once the state's largest marketer of petroleum products, Standard Oil Co. of Nebraska's prominence paralleled the coming of the automobile.

Through the efforts of the Ogallala Main Street Program, it was purchased in 1968 and renovated in 2002-2003. Like the Ogallala Post Office, the Mansion on the Hill and the Little Keystone Church, it is listed on the National

Register of Historic Places. Today, the station with its office and attached canopy, and adjacent 1937 service bay, serve as the Spruce Street Visitors Center and meeting room.

# White Beaches, Crystal Clear-WATER

### Lake McConaughy

Nearly everything about Lake McConaughy is big! Its 30,500 surface acres make it Nebraska's largest reservoir with over 100 miles of shore line. At full storage, McConaughy is 22 miles long, four miles wide and 142 feet deep at the dam. The dam is among the largest of its type in the world, and the fish grow to trophy proportions, accounting for several state records. Even its nickname, "Big Mac" reflects its giant stature.













### Spend the day or the week

To most Nebraskans and residents of neighboring states, McConaughy is known as a place for outdoor good times. Its waters and white sand beaches provide the setting for many different kinds of outdoor recreation. In addition to excellent fishing and boating, Big Mac has become a favorite with campers, sail boaters, windsurfers, swimmers, water skiers, picnickers, scuba divers, hunters, ice boaters and many other outdoor fun seekers.



Lake Ogallala

If wind curtails fishing, skiing, sailing and other water sports on the big lake, all is not lost. Situated just below Kingsley Dam, Lake Ogallala is an integral part of the Lake McConaughy recreation complex. Known as the "little lake", it was formed when fill material was removed to build the dam. Lake Ogallala boasts some excellent fishing for rainbow trout and yellow perch. The lake is 1 1/2 miles long and a quarter mile wide. It has about 5 miles of shore line and covers about 320 acres.

Enjoy the white sandy beaches & the clear blue water







## White Beaches, Crystal Clear-WATER

Experience the power of Kingsley Dam & the Hydro Plant Water from Lake McConaughy is the "fuel" for Kingsley Hydroplant, which went online in

Water from Lake McConaughy is the "fuel" for Kingsley Hydroplant, which went online in 1984. The Outlet Tower and the Morning Glory Spillway are used to release water from Lake McConaughy. The Outlet Tower is used for normal water release operations. Water enters the tower at the bottom of the lake with flows controlled by gates; a steel reinforced concrete tube connects the tower to the Hydroplant. The Morning Glory Spillway is the flood control outlet and used only in the event of very high water levels. The immense spray of water coming thru the bypass valve is the noted feature of the Kingsley Hydroplant. The bypass valve is used regularly during the summer to add oxygen to the water in Lake Ogallala for the benefit of the Lake's trout population.

Kingsley Dam, one of the largest earthen dams in the world, holds back the waters of the North Platte River to form Lake McConaughy. Kingsley Dam was built from 1936 to 1941 by pumping sand from the bed of the North Platte River to form its sides while pumping loess soil mixed with water into the center of the structure to form a water tight core. Pumping from the downstream side of the dam formed Lake Ogallala. The dam is 3 1/2 miles long, 162 feet high and 1100 feet wide at its base and was built for irrigation purposes.







View the soaring eagles

Clear Creek Wildlife Management Area at the west end of Lake McConaughy encompasses over 6,000 acres of land and water, attracting thousands of Canadian geese. Geese, ducks, pheasants, quail and turkey can be hunted, by permission, on private land or through commercial outfitters. Adjacent Garden County is considered Nebraska's Goose Hunting Capital. Popular with bird watchers, particularly during spring and fall migrations, are thousands of Sandhill cranes, white pelicans, as well as ducks, geese and shore birds and occasionally, whooping cranes.

The Lake McConaughy region is considered on of the richest ornithological attractions in the Great Plains. "It's the best place in the state and the third best in the country to go birding, " according to University of Nebraska life science professor and author Dr. Paul Johnsgard. More than 320 species of birds have been identified in the areas, as well as more than 100 breeding species.

Bald eagles congregate in large numbers below Kingsley Dam and Lake Ogallala from January through early March. The site has the highest eagle viewing numbers in the state with as many as 368 eagles sighted in the area in one day. The site has a public eagle viewing facility.

### Visit one of a kind places



Just east of Kingsley Dam, the Little Church at Keystone is a monument to religious harmony. The combined Catholic-Protestant Church was built in a pioneer town that was too small for two churches. Special dispensation was received from Pope Leo XIII. It has a Roman Catholic altar at one end and a Protestant altar at the other end. Pews with reversible backs were installed to permit parishioners to face either altar. The 18 by 40 foot church, which seats 70 people, was built in 1908 at a cost of \$1,200. The last regular services were held in 1949, but the church is open in the summer by appointment to visitors.

# Fresh Air, Plenty of RECREATION







### Fishing here is like no where else

Fishing has long been the primary lure to Lake McConaughy with its cool, clear, deep waters. Game fish vary from sporty rainbow trout to the everyday catfish. Prized most highly by the local angler is the walleye, and Nebraska's current state record of 16 lbs 2 oz came from Big Mac.

Also ranked is the white bass fishing. In recent years, a close relative of the white bass has been stocked, and the striped bass offers a tackle busting contest an angler would not soon forget. Although smaller in size, the smallmouth bass provides some dynamite action. Lake Ogallala boasts some excellent fishing for rainbow trout and yellow perch.

### Award winning hunting

Come fall, when campers, anglers, water skiers and other warm-weather enthusiasts pretty much abandon the lake, Big Mac becomes water fowl hunting territory. Clear Creek Waterfowl Management Area at the end of the lake attracts substantial numbers of Canadian geese, which can be hunted on the controlled shooting area, as well as much of the rest of the lake. Winter is an invitation to ice boaters, eagle viewers, skaters and backpackers, adding to the Lake's year round appeal.

Explore our rich history in State Parks

\*Ash Hollow State Historical Park - Lewellen

Boot Hill Historical Marker - Ogallala

California Hill Historical Marker - Brule

\*Clear Creek State Waterfowl Management Area - Lake McConaughy

Cowboy Capital Historical Marker - Ogallala

Humphreys Pond - Ogallala

\*Lake McConaughy State Recreation Area - North of Ogallala

\*Lake Ogallala State Recreation Area - North of Ogallala

Ogallala Historical Marker - Ogallala

\*Requires a State Park Permit.

Unique places to spend the day

Ogallala's Petrified Wood Gallery is a showcase of natural history specializing in ancient woods and fossils collected over 45 years by Howard and Harvey Kenfield. On display at the gallery are many rare pieces of petrified wood collected from all over the world. Also featured are hand crafted music boxes, prize-winning 3 dimensional petrified wood pictures, knothole framed pictures, and Indian artifacts. The gallery is open year round, with shorter winter hours.



Arthur, Nebraska located 35 miles north of Ogallala on Nebraska State Highway 61 has three unique attractions for travelers.

The world's only Baled Hay Church was built in 1927. The hay was baled and tied with wire by hand. The bales were stacked on edge with three laths driven through each holding them together

to form the walls, which were then covered in stucco.

The tiny Arthur County Courthouse was in use from 1914-1961 and still contains authentic furnishings. The third historic attraction in Arthur is the Mill Camp Log Cabin built in 1877. The cabin was built from cedar logs cut from trees which grew along the Dismal River. Once cut, they were hauled by teams of oxen. All three attractions are owned and maintained by Arthur County Historical Society.

Holf a round or Two Reith County has two golf courses, Bayside Golf Course located at Lake McConaughy and West Wind Golf Club located in Ogallala.

Bayside Golf Club could best be described as a traditional, link style golf course with rolling hills and native grasses. The layout of all 18 holes over looking Lake McConaughy is more than enough to lure the most avid golfer. Adding to the breathtaking and dramatic layout of the course is the amazing 10,025 square foot log-cabin-style clubhouse.

West Wind is an 18-hole course with a mature, par 36 front nine and a back nine completed in 1997, making an excellent 72 par course. West Wind features a fully stocked pro shop and lounge.



# Not for the Faint of Heart WILD WEST

From 1879 to 1884, 100,000 to 125,000 cattle each year were trailed into Ogallala

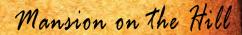
After 1875..."the big cow towns were Caldwell, Ellsworth & Dodge City, Kansas & Ogallala, Nebraska. By 1880 Texas cattle had gotten as far north as Miles City, Montana and Texas cowboys with them."

Teddy Blue Abbott We Pointed Them North

## Ogallala was named for the Oglala band of Lakota Sioux Indians

Historic Walk of Fame

The Ogallala Historic Walk of Fame features historic markers depicting all facets of transportation that helped form the west. Featured are the Great Platte River Road, the End of the Texas Trail, the Pony Express Trail, the Mormon Trail, the Union Pacific Railroad, California Hill, Highways 29/92, Interstate 80, and the Lincoln Highway.



An authentic Victorian style home, the Mansion on the Hill was Ogallala's finest residence when it was completed in 1887. L.A. Brandhoefer, a wealthy banker from Chicago, became intrigued with the open prairies, the Platte River valley, cowboys & Indians, and early pioneers whose fortitude and determination to win the West inspired him. Mr. Brandhoefer was engaged to a girl in Chicago and as a wedding gift, he built the large three-story red brick mansion. Upon its completion, he returned to Chicago for his sweetheart only to find that she had married another.

The mansion has many unique features including ten-foot ceilings, sixteen inch thick walls of solid brick, deep, narrow windows with shutters of walnut, two beautiful hand carved fireplaces, solid brass hardware throughout, carved corner blocks and panel inserts on the doors and window frames, solid cherry wood throughout, and a beautiful curved staircase leading to the second floor. The red brick used to build the mansion was kilned in Ogallala.

The beautiful structure stands as a monument in memory to the area's pioneers. It is owned by the Keith County Historical Society and has been preserved and maintained as a historical landmark, as a tourist attraction, and as an educational institution and for the preservation of the area's history. The mansion is open from Memorial Day through mid-September.





Boot Hill & the Gomorrah of the Plains

In the stirring days of the 1800's, when the present city of Ogallala was an infant town on the Union Pacific Railroad, Boot Hill Cemetery was the final resting place for cowboys, drifters, and settlers, who helped make Ogallala a booming cow town.

Numerous stories are told of those days when gun battles took their toll on human life. Many buried at Boot Hill ran afoul of the law and the streets of Ogallala echoed with gunfire as some slick gambler or horse thief met his waterloo. On burial was that of "Rattlesnake Ed," who was shot down over a nine dollar bet in a Monte game in the "Cowboy's Rest Saloon."

In his book "Log of a Cowboy", trail driver Andy Adams wrote, "We finally scaled the last divide and there below us in the valley of the South Platte River nestled Ogallala, the Gomorrah of the cattle trail. From amongst its half hundred buildings, no church spire pointed upward, but instead, 3/4 of its business houses were dance halls, gambling houses and saloons." One trail boss, who let his trail drivers go into Dodge City for recreation when they arrived there, refused to let his cowhands come into Ogallala because of its wild and unsavory reputation - thus giving rise to a phase that Ogallala was the "town too tough for Texans."

Most were buried with their boots on, thus the name Boot Hill. The bodies, placed in canvas sacks, were lowered into shallow graves and marked with a wooden headboard. Boot Hill is unique –buried in its sod are the many stories of the early days of Ogallala.





"Ogallala was the mother of all cow towns." Ray Tierney of Alliance, 1941 President of the Nebraska Stock Growers Association



"There are two things the old time cowpuncher was afraid of - a decent woman and being set afoot."

Teddy Blue Abbott



# Miles and miles of TRAILS Where the trails meet



Keith County is on the route traversed by the American Indians, explorers, fur trappers, soldiers, gold seekers and pioneers and half a million immigrants - the Oregon, California and Mormon Trails. It was on the Pony Express and it was on the route of the Texas Drovers who trailed cattle on the Texas or Western Trail.

Scotsman Robert Stuart in 1813 became the first known white man to traverse to Keith County. Stuart and his band of six hardy men discovered the South Pass (the easiest route across the Continental Divide) in 1812 and camped near the Wyoming Nebraska border that winter. The group spent three nights in Keith County along the North Platte River on their way back to St. Louis. The men, during their 13 month west to east journey, discovered what was to become the Oregon Trail.

As many as 350,000 to 500,000 emigrants passed through Keith County on the Oregon Trail, the California Trail and the Mormon Trail in the 1840's, 1850's and 1860's. More than 70,000 Mormons traveled the road west, the Mormon Pioneer Trail, starting in Illinois and ending near the Great Salt Lake in Utah.

A major crossing of the South Platte River west of Brule was the Old California or Ash Hollow Crossing. It was here that J.P. Beauvais opened what is called the Beauvais Road Ranche, a trading post and military post site. Arthur MacArthur, father of General Douglas MacArthur, was once posted here. Many emigrants in the 1860s refer to the Beauvais Ranche.

There were three Pony Express stations in what was to become Keith County, Alkali Lake about two miles south of what is now Paxton, Sand Hill Station (also referred to as Gill's Station) south of Ogallala, and Diamond Springs, located one mile west of Brule.

From 1875-1885, Ogallala served as the terminus of the Texas Trail as drovers delivered their herds of Longhorn cattle by the tens of thousands. For a ten-year period Ogallala was the point of delivery for cattle driven up the Western Trail to stock the northern ranges, to feed gold miners in South Dakota and to sell government contractors for the Indian agencies. It was a three-month journey to Ogallala from North Texas; five months from south Texas.

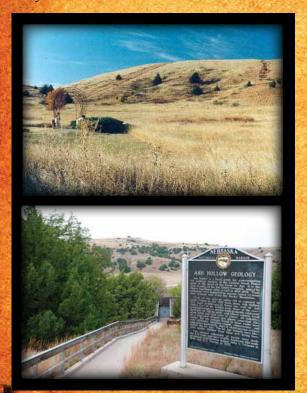
Even today, more than a century after the cattle drives, Ogallala Livestock Auction Market remains No. 1 in the state in cattle sales and cattle remain Keith County's No. 1 industry.

Even the railroad followed the historic highway of westward migration - The Great Platte River Road. Union Pacific construction reached Ogallala in 1867. And in the 1900's, so did the Lincoln Highway - U.S Highway 30 - the nation's first transcontinental highway, and Interstate 80.

Scenic byways

The Lincoln Highway Scenic and Historic Byway was the first transcontinental highway in the country. The idea of a road to connect the coast was conceived in 1913, and once it was completed, was a well-traveled route across the United States. The Lincoln Highway travels across Keith County, through Paxton, Ogallala and Brule. Today, many people travel this route for something that can't be found along the interstate - genuine small town Americana.

Western Trails Scenic & Historic Byway is
Nebraska first scenic byway. Highways 26 and
92 trace the most fabled stretch of the Oregon and
Mormon Trails. Never straying from the North
Platte River and the tall groves of cottonwood
trees lining its banks, the byway takes you past one
famous landmark after another. You'll see gently
rolling hills, acres of prime farmland, grass covered
sand dunes and wildlife including bald eagles and
bison. Superb scenery, quaint towns and celebrated
history make this drive well worth it.





### Ash Hollow State Historical Park

Ash Hollow State Historical Park near the west end of Lake McConaughy in Garden County is one of Nebraska's most intriguing state parks. A modern interpretive center interprets the area's geology, paleontology, prehistoric history and use by native American Indians, the military and 19th Century explorers and pioneers.

Ash Hollow Cave shows evidence of use of the area by prehistoric man as many as 6,000 years ago. More than 30 million years of geologic history and fossils of prehistoric mammals including rhinoceros and mastodons can be examined at the park.

Ash Hollow was a stopping point for Plains Indians, a site of U.S. troop maneuvers and a place for shelter and water on the Oregon, California and Mormon Trails. Ruts are still visible at Windlass Hill where wagons were lowered into the valley.

In 1835, it was the site of a battle between the Sioux and Pawnee and in 1855 was the site of one of the largest engagements between Native Americans and the white man.

## Take a Break from the adventure HOSPITALITY

### A clean comfortable room to rest your head

HOTEL/MOTEL	PHONE	<b>LOCATION</b>
Best Western Stagecoach Inn	308-284-3656	I-80 Ogallala
Comfort Inn	308-284-4028	I-80 Ogallala
Days Inn	308-284-6365	I-80 Ogallala
Holiday Inn Express	308-284-2266	I-80 Ogallala
Quality Inn (Platte River Inn)	308-284-3623	I-80 Ogallala
Rodeway Inn	308-284-2056	I-80 Ogallala
South Platte Cabins and Kennels	308-284-2266	I-80 Ogallala
Super 8	308-284-2076	I-80 Ogallala
Elms Motel	308-284-3404	West HW 30 Ogallala
Lazy K Motel	308-284-4056	East HW 30 Ogallala
Oregon Trail Motel	308-284-3705	East HW 30 Ogallala
Pump & Pantry Motel	308-284-6117	East HW 30 Ogallala
The Lodge/Days Inn	308-239-4510	I-80 Paxton
Bayside Golf Lodging	308-287-4653	Lake McConaughy
The Beach House	308-726-2892	Lake McConaughy
The Dunes	303-521-6018	Lake McConaughy
Eagle Canyon Hideaway	308-287-2673	Lake McConaughy
Kingsley Lodge	308-284-2775	Lake McConaughy
Marina Landing	308-355-3535	Lake McConaughy
North Shore Lodge	308-355-2222	Lake McConaughy
Otter Creek Lodge	308-355-2372	Lake McConaughy
Pleasant View Lodge	308-355-5000	Lake McConaughy
Samuelson's/Eagle Nest	308-355-2321	Lake McConaughy
Van's Lakeview	308-284-4965	Lake McConaughy
Gander Inn Motel	308-778-5616	Lewellen
Nancy B's Backyard Bunkhouse	308-778-5408	Lewellen





### Outdoor accommodations

CAMP	PHONE	<b>LOCATIO</b> N
Cedar View	Gate 13	Lake McConaughy
Lake Ogallala	Road 24	Lake McConaughy
Eagle Canyon Hideaway	308-287-2673	Lake McConaughy
North Shore Lodge	308-355-2222	Lake McConaughy
Otter Creek Lodge	308-355-2372	Lake McConaughy
Pleasant View Campground	308-355-5000	Lake McConaughy
Van's Lakeview Fishing Camp	308-284-4965	Lake McConaughy
Country View Campground	308-284-2415	Ogallala
Moose Lodge Campground	308-284-6717	Ogallala
Open Corral Campground	308-284-4327	Ogallala
Days Inn	308-239-4510	Paxton
Cottonwood Grove RV Park	308-284-2282	Roscoe
Riverside Campground	308-287-2474	Brule
Oregon Trail Trading Post	308-778-5879	Lewellen

### Interesting places to visit

#### FRONT STREET

Not so long ago, Front Street was the headquarters for Texas drovers, tinhorn gamblers, pretty dance hall gals and some of the fastest guns in the West. Now you can relive this riproaring era along the famed street of old. Push aside those swinging doors of the Crystal Palace and suddenly, it is 1875 again. Walk right up to the old bar, put a foot on the brass rail, cock an elbow and down a cold mug of sarsaparilla. The trail dust washes down and you relax...the house lights dim and the stage fills with the prettiest gals west of the Missouri River...the Front Street show is under way! Front Street is open year round. The Crystal Palace Revue is featured in the summer months.





### OLES' BIG GAME STEAKHOUSE & LOUNGE

Ole's Big Game Steakhouse & Lounge, located 20 miles east of Ogallala in Paxton, became a showcase for the adventures of Rosser O. Herstedt, known as "Ole" to locals. Over a period of 35 years, Ole traveled to every continent, gathering the trophies from his hunting safaris that became part of the more than 200 mounts, now showcased at Ole's. Photographs and other artifacts of his adventures line the walls. Ole's opened his tavern on Paxton's main street at 12:01 a.m. on August 9, 1933, one minute after prohibition in the United States came to an end. Ole's is open year round.

## OGALLALA CONTRACTOR

### SO MANY PLACES TO SEE, SO MANY THINGS TO DO, YOU WILL KEEP COMING BACK!

### YEARLY EVENTS

### JANUARY THROUGH MARCH Eagle Viewing at Lake Ogallala

### NOVEMBER THROUGH APRIL Bird Watching at Lake McConaughy and Surrounding area. Migratory Birds, Eagles, Sandhill Cranes, Least Terns, Piping Plovers and More!

#### JANUARY

Ag Appreciation Banquet Women in Ag Luncheon

#### **FEBRUARY**

Oregon Trail Home Show Brule Gun Show

#### MARCH

Brule Fireman's Ball Pheasants Forever Banquet

#### APRIL

Area 14 Cattlewomen
Annual Beef & Wine Tasting

#### MAY

Spring Fun Fest
Drover Spring Classic
Golf Tournament
Catfish Classic
Fishing Tournament
Shut Up & Fish
Walleye Tournament
Soap Box Derby Rally Race

#### JUNE

Ash Hollow Pageant
Brule & Ogallala City Wide
Garage Sales
Go Fish Kids Fishing Clinic
and Water Expo
All American Soap Box Derby
Championship Race

#### JULY

4th of July Festival Kites and Castles Demolition Derby

#### **AUGUST**

Brule Day
Keith County Fair and Round-Up
Rodeo
Antique and Classic Tractor Pull
Sand Volleyball Tournament
Cowboy Capital Open
Golf Tournament
Summer Soap Box Derby
Rally Race

#### SEPTEMBER

Mac Attack Sailboat Regatta
Paxton Labor Day Celebration
Thunder in the Valley
Paxton Bull Riding Classic
Blue Water Blues Festival
Ogallala West Toucan Open
Indian Summer Rendezvous
Big Mac Fall Classic
Walleye Tournament
Brule Gun Show
Fall Soap Box Derby Rally Race

#### OCTOBER

**Ducks Unlimited Banquet** 

### NOVEMBER

Arts and Craft Show

#### **DECEMBER**

Brule Holiday Open House Christmas Parade of Lights







For more information on all events, dates, times & locations please call 1-800-658-4390 www.visitogallala.com www.lakemcconaughy.com

THE WATER...THE WEST...THE BEST.